

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 SCA-01 DHA-02 OMB-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IOE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7991

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

/AMEMBASSY LAGOS 580

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 3326

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, WA

SUBJECT: CHURCH LEADERS IN NAMIBIA PROPOSE POLITICAL FORMULA

1. SUMMARY: THE FOUR MOST PROMINENT CLERGYMEN IN NAMIBIA HAVE AIRED A COMPROMISE PROPOSAL INVOLVING JOINT UN-SAG ADMINISTRATION OF THE TERRITORY IN THE TRANSITION PERIOD. THE SAG HAS DISMISSED THE PROPOSAL AS UNIMPORTANT. THE CHURCHMEN WERE PROBABLY ACTING ON THEIR OWN INITIATIVE BUT THEIR ACTION MAY FURTHER STIFFEN SWAPO'S RESISTANCE TO THE PROCESS BEING DEVELOPED BY THE CONTACT GROUP. END SUMMARY.

2. ACCORDING TO A JULY 5 PRESS REPORT FROM WINDHOEK, CHURCH LEADERS IN NAMIBIA HAVE SURFACED A "COMPROMISE PROPOSAL" CONFIDENTIAL

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FOR HANDLING NAMIBIA'S TRANSITION TO INDEPENDENCE. LEADERS OF THE LUTHERAN, ANGLICAN, AND ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCHES PROPOSE THAT A TWELVE-MAN COUNCIL BE APPOINTED WITH EQUAL REPRESENTATION FOR THE UN AND PRETORIA TO CONTROL THE SELF-DETERMINATION PROCESS. THE COUNCIL WOULD APPOINT CO-ADMINISTRATORS FROM EACH SIDE TO ORGANIZE AND SUPERVISE ELECTIONS FOR A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY. THE CO-ADMINISTRATORS WOULD ALSO REORGANIZE ADMINISTR-

ATION OF THE TERRITORY, ALTHOUGH FOR PRACTICAL REASONS PRESENT CIVIL SERVANTS WOULD REMAIN. THE SCHEME ENVISAGES THE REPEAL OF "OPPRESSIVE AND DISCRIMINATORY" LAWS, THE RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS, THE RETURN OF POLITICAL EXILES, AND A PHASED WITHDRAWAL OF SOUTH AFRICAN FORCES PRIOR TO ELECTIONS WITH UN OR NEUTRAL PEACE-KEEPING FORCES TO TAKE THEIR PLACE.

3. THE ARGUS REPORTER WHO FILED THE STORY, CLIVE COWLEY, TOLD THE EMBASSY THAT THE CHURCHMEN INVOLVED ARE LUKAS DE VRIES AND LEONARD AUALA (LUTHERAN), R. KOPPMAN (CATHOLIC) AND EDWARD MORROW (ANGLICAN). ACCORDING TO COWLEY, THE CHURCHMEN, WHO ARE SYMPATHETIC TO SWAPO, BELIEVE THAT SWAPO WOULD REJECT ANY NAMIBIAN SETTLEMENT PROPOSITION INVOLVING ELECTIONS BEFORE THE WITHDRAWAL OF ALL SOUTH AFRICAN SECURITY FORCES. THE HAVE THEREFORE FELT IT ESSENTIAL TO COME FORWARD WITH A "COMPROMISE." THE PROPOSAL WAS DEVELOPED FOLLOWING CONVERSATIONS BY DE VRIES AND AUALA WITH SWAPO VICE PRESIDENT MUYONGO IN DAR ES SALAAM AT THE TIME OF THE RECENT LUTHERAN CONGRESS THERE. APPARENTLY DE VRIES AND AUALA CONCLUDED THEN THAT THEY SHOULD SEEK AN ALTERNATIVE FORMULA WHICH SWAPO MIGHT APPROVE. IT IS COWLEY'S IMPRESSION THAT THE CHURCH LEADERS DO NOT YET KNOW WHETHER THEIR PROPOSAL WILL WIN SWAPO'S SUPPORT. COWLEY REPORTED THAT THEY DISCUSSED THE MATTER WITH THE COMMISSIONER-GENERAL FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, JAN DE WET, BEFORE FORMULATING THEIR IDEAS.

4. IT WAS ALSO REPORTED BY COWLEY THAT FOREIGN MINISTER
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BOTHA WOULD VISIT WINDHOEK, POSSIBLE AS EARLY AS JULY 8, TO MEET WITH THE FOUR CHURCHMEN. THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAS NOW ANNOUNCED THAT BOTHA AND SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS FOURIE WILL VISIT WINDHOEK NEXT WEEK TO BRING THE TURNHALLE DELEGATES UP-TO-DATE ON THE STATUS OF THE NAMIBIA TALKS. FOURIE TOLD THE AMBASSADOR PRIVATELY THAT BOTHA WILL NOT HOLD DISCUSSIONS ON THE CHURCHMEN'S INITIATIVE. FOURIE DISMISSED THE INITIATIVE AS HAVING NO IMPORTANCE. MEANWHILE, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE TURNHALLE CONSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEE, DIRK MUDGE, TOLD THE PRESS THAT THE CHURCH LEADERS' PROPOSAL HAD COME "OUT OF THE BLUE" AND IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE TO TAKE THE PROPOSAL UNDER CONSIDERATION AT THIS TIME.

5. COMMENT: THE CLERGYMEN SEEM TO BE DABBLING IN THE SECULAR REALM ON THEIR OWN INITIATIVE. THEIR ACTION COULD HAVE THE EFFECT OF FURTHER STIFFENING SWAPO'S RESISTANCE TO THE PROCESS BEING DEVELOPED BY THE CONTACT GROUP.
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